

Habitat is where it's at!



We hope you enjoy reading about the adventures of the **Green River Region** personnel as they work to **Conserve**Wildlife and Serve People!

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Fish on!



June 2016

Special dates and points of interest:

- ROCK SPRINGS KIDS FISHING DAY JUNE 18— LOCATED AT
 THE ROCK SPRINGS POND-SOUTH SIDE OF THE ROAD LEADING INTO THE ROCK SPRINGS GOLF COURSE. EVENT 9 AM TO
 1 PM. SPONSORED BY SEEDSKADEE TROUT UNLIMITED
 CHAPTER
- EVANSTON KIDS FISHING DAY JUNE 25— LOCATED AT THE UP ICE PONDS, REGISTRATION STARTS AT 7:45 AM, FISHING FROM 8 AM TO 1 PM. SPONSORED BY UPPER BEAR RIVER TROUT UNLIMITED CHAPTER
- PREFERENCE POINT ONLY APPLICATION PERIOD JULY 1
 THROUGH OCTOBER 31
- REMEMBER: YOU CAN BUY ALL YOUR HUNTING LICENSES, REQUIRED STAMPS AND MANY MORE PRODUCTS AT THE WGFD WEBSITE FROM THE COMFORT OF YOUR OWN COMPUTER!



Summer is an excellent time to take your family fishing. During the month of June, there are several family and or youth fishing events scheduled statewide. These events are sponsored by the WGFD and conservation organizations like Trout Unlimited, fishing clubs, city parks and recreation, and others. There are events in southwest Wyoming and you can read more about the details of these events in the above calendar. For a more comprehensive list check out this link at the WGFD website: https://wgfd.wyo.gov/WNews/Free-Fishing-Day-June-4-and-other-fishing-events-fishing-e

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~Green River Fisheries Crew begins busy summer netting work ~ Burbot gets greedy







The fisheries crew in the Green River Region has been conducting annual gill netting and fish sampling to monitor fish populations in waters around southwest Wyoming. Gill netting is a widely-used technique by all game and fish agencies, to gather large numbers of fish for data collection and research. Gill netting requires time for preparation, time for setting nets, waiting time, and time for retrieving nets; not to mention net repairs! The time each of these tasks takes to complete will vary with the number and type of nets to be set and how long they will be left in the water. Many of the live game fish, like large lake trout, smallmouth bass, or German brown trout, are weighed, measured, and then released back into the water. Fisheries biologists can tell a lot about the health and quality of fish by reviewing and comparing years of gill netting data in area waters.

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Photos left, top to bottom: Green River fish technician AJ Van-V Domelen pulls in a gill net loaded with fish on Flaming Gorge; V AJ (left) and fellow technician Sadie St Clair pulling in another V Gorge gill net and Green River Fisheries Biologist John Walrath V drives the boat and records fish species, weights and lengths.





This burbot swallowed a rainbow trout two thirds its size, as it sat suspended in the gill net. (photo above and left) Burbot were illegally introduced into the gally introduced into the late 1990's and continue to be a top predator of game fish in the Gorge and the entire Green River drainage.

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~Rock Springs Game Warden Dave Hays Reaches Career Milestone~



Rock Springs Game Warden Dave Hays (left) receives his service award from Green River Wildlife Supervisor Steve DeCecco (right).



Hays (right, in camo) instructs fellow game wardens on the firing range.

Rock Spring Game Warden Dave Hays just reached a career milestone; Hays has worked for the Wyoming Game and Fish Department 35 years and is not ready to call it quits, just yet.

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Hays, an Iowa native, graduated from University of Wyoming in 1980 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Zoology and Wildlife Management. Hays began his career with the WGFD in July of 1979 in the Laramie Game and Fish Regional Office, working various temporary appointy ments as a check station technician, biologist aid, district biologist, and eventually, a game warden trainee in Glenrock in 1982. In 1983, after graduating from the Wyoming y Law Enforcement Academy, Hays was assigned to Alcova to work as a watercraft enforcement officer and, later that year, to work in the Cheyenne Game and Fish Headquary ters. In 1984, Hays was assigned to Douglas and served as the district game warden in Converse County for 10 years. Hays transferred to Green River in 1994 and to Rock Springs in 1997, where he has been district game warden for the past 19 years.

In 1993, Hays received the statewide WGFD Peer Recognition Award and was also named Wildlife Officer of the
Year by the Wyoming Game Warden Association.

"From the first day I started this career I would often think to myself, I can't believe I'm getting paid to do this," Hays said. "After more than three decades, I still have a y few of those same reflective moments."

"Dave Hays has distinguished himself as a professional and dedicated wildlife officer and wildlife manager throughout his career," said Green River Wildlife Supervisor Steve DeCecco. "Wyoming's wildlife and citizens have benefitted from his knowledge and expertise."

Hays shares his life with his two sons, David and Evan, and three dogs, who think his green patrol truck is their second home.

Enforcement Happenings

There are unsolved poaching cases in the Green River Region. If you have any information about any wildlife violation please contact your local game warden or the **STOP Poaching Hotline** at:

1-877-WGFD-TIP (1-877-943-3847)

 You can also report a wildlife violation at the WGFD website

http://wgfd.wyo.gov



~Green River Game Wardens Qualify With Their Firearms~ Personnel Receive AIS Training~





New Green River Game Wardens Rob Shipe (left) and Justin Dodd (right) qualify with their shotguns. (photo left, center)



Every year Wyoming Game and Fish Department game wardens must qualify with their firearms in order to maintain their game warden status and Wyoming Peace Officer Status. (photo on the left) On the range, left to right, Baggs Game Warden Kim Olson, Kemmerer Game Warden Chris Baird, Evanston Game Warden Nick Roberts, and Mountain View Game Warden Allen Deru. (photo below) Rock Springs Game Warden Dave Hays (right in camo) instructs Green River Wildlife Supervisor Steve DeCecco and Cokeville Game Warden Neil Hymas.

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Green River game wardens, fisheries and wildlife biologists received a training on how to conduct watercraft inspections and decontaminate watercraft suspected of harboring aquatic invasive species, such as zebra or quagga mussels. Photos right, left to right:

Evanston Game Warden Nick Roberts, Green River Fisheries Biologist Troy Laughlin,

Green River AIS Coordinator Wes Gordon,

Rock Springs Game Warden Dave Hays and
Evanston AIS Coordinator Jessica Murray.

~Evanston High School Students Help Build Fence Ladders~ Cokeville hunter bags 1st bear~







WGFD Southwest Access Yes Coordinator Andy Countryman helps out on the important fence repair. <u>_</u>

Evanston Game Warden Nick Roberts would √ like to give a huge thanks to the *Evanston High* [♥] *School welding class* who built two fence ladders for local walk-in hunting areas. "One ladder was y placed at the Bigelow Bench and the other at the Yellow Creek Walk-in Access Areas," Roberts said. "The ladders will help hunters safely and comfortably climb over fences to access the walk-in properties. The welding class also fabricated rods that were used to repair badly damaged one-way gates walong the interstate 80 wildlife fence between Evanston and Bridger Valley."

Game Wardens Andy Countryman, Allen Deru, Nick Roberts, and Access Yes Technician Nicole √ Reed spent a day repairing approximately 40 of the gates to help keep migrating deer off the interstate.



Badly damaged fence along Interstate 80



Cokeville Game Warden Neil Hymas reports, as the y spring warms up, black bear hunters are observing more activity, especially around bait sites. "Bear hunters in Wyoming are fortunate to have a high percentage of black bears sport- $_{\scriptscriptstyle ext{t}}$ ing hair colors other than black," said Hymas." G&F personnel have already registered bears that were harvested with \(\text{blonde, cinnamon, and several shades of brown-colored } \) hides."

Photo left: Kayla Cook of Cokeville, Wyoming, with her first y bear. Kayla graduated from high school the previous week, then shared an exciting bear hunt with her father, Scott, that resulted in a beautiful brown color-phase male black bear.

~ Pronghorn fawns arrive ~ Please do not pick up young wildlife ~ Tiger Trout











Baggs Game Warden Kim Olson was fortunate to snap this pronghorn fawn photo. A reminder to everyone reading this newsletter to please, never pick up young wildlife. Most wildlife mothers hide their young and return periodically to feed and care for them. People finding young animals often assume these newborns have been abandoned, but this is almost never the case. The mother knows where her young are, and will almost certainly return.

In addition to removing an animal from its wild home and decreasing its chance of survival, possession of game and most nongame species is against state and federal law. The best solution is to leave the young animals alone. Keep your pets away from them and talk to your children about not picking up young wildlife.

Olson also reported anglers are catching a few fish at High Savery Reservoir. Green River fisheries biologists continue to remove the white suckers from the reservoir to improve trout and kokanee populations.

Approximately 3,000 white suckers were removed this year, over a three day period.

Since the completion of High Savery Dam in 2005
the Wyoming Game and Fish Department has stocked
Tiger trout, rainbow trout, cutthroat trout, and kokanee
salmon. There is also a wild population of Colorado
River cutthroat trout and brook trout. In recent years,
the white sucker populations have increased and are
negatively impacting trout and kokanee salmon populations. Like many other reservoirs, High Savery is
spilling over right now. (photo left, center)

Kemmerer Game Warden Chris Baird took the photo of a happy angler on Viva Naughton Reservoir. (far left) Tiger trout were stocked into Viva Naughton two years ago to provide anglers an opportunity to catch another game species. Green River fish personnel gill netted Viva Naughton Reservoir near Kemmerer in mid June and removed approximately 800 Utah chubs, which are competing with rainbow and tiger trout for habitat. (photo bottom)

Green River Fisheries Technician Graham Buggs (left), youngster Jed Wasseen (center) and his dad, Jim Wasseen, WLCI Coordinator, pick lots of Utah chubs from the gill nets.

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For the first time ever, Wyoming Hunter Education was offered in Rock Springs High School thanks to teacher and founder of the Fire Law and Leadership Academy John Cundall. Green River I&E Specialist Lucy Wold worked with Cundall to teach the class at the same time assisting him with his certification to continue teaching the class each semester at the high school. Students did a hypothermia experiment using the "ice chamber of death" (a.k.a. cooler loaded with ice) as part of their survival training. (photo left, top)

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The Southwest Chapter of Muley Fanatics
Foundation donated ten Mossberg inert firearms to be used to teach students proper firearms handling. The guns cannot fire ammunition, but dummy ammo rounds may be loaded. The cost of the two gun sets was \$3,000.00! Thank you Muley Fanatics! Photo left, left to right: David Munoz, Aaron Logan, Dan Stanton, Chris Steffen, Don Cuthbertson, Kevin Spence, and Green River Wildlife Supervisor Steve DeCecco.

Staff at Seedskadee National Wildlife Refuge
conducted multiple educational field trips for
school groups from all over southwest Wyoming
in May and early June. Cokeville Meadows
Refuge Manager Katie Theule said they worked
with 500 students this spring. GR I&E Specialist
Lucy Wold went along on some of the field trips
and taught students about migratory birds and
macro invertebrate (aquatic insects that have no
internal skeleton and you can see them with the
naked eye) and how they influence fisheries
ecology. (photo left)

Students "swam" across a playing field as stoneflies, caddis flies, mayflies, midges and rattailed maggots. Since the stoneflies, mayflies, and caddis flies were less tolerant of the pollution (Lucy and Katie) they died quickly and were replaced by more tolerable insects, midges and rat-tailed maggots. Fish don't like to eat them! They would much rather have a stone, caddis or mayfly! Makes sense, right? (photo left)

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Office managers Sheila Watts (right) and Regina Dickson (left) have a little fun with the newsletter author and enjoy a brief break from watercraft registrations. Watercraft registration picks up considerably in June and will remain steady through August.

> http://wgfd.wyo.gov Office Phone: 307-875-3223 Office Fax: 307-875-3242 Toll Free In-State 1-800-843-8096

Conserving Wildlife-Serving People

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stay connected







~Critter Spotlight~ Tiger salamander By Mark Zornes a.k.a. Leopold





Juvenile tiger salamander "Axolotl"

- Wyoming's only salamander, the tiger salamander is a large amphibian belonging to a group called mole salamanders.
- Tiger salamanders can be encountered in a variety of forms. Juveniles are fully aquatic small salamanders with visible, feather-like external gills, usually olive to lime green in coloration. Adults (especially males) are very large salamanders, some in excess of seven inches from snout to vent, excluding the tail. They are mottled in coloration, with a base color of olive to yellow, black, or green, highlighted with various shades of white and yellows. *To confuse things, some adults remain in a fully aquatic* form and are referred to as neotenic or axolotl (from the Aztec god Xolotl, the god of lightning and death or the "water dog") by herpetologists (those that study reptiles and amphibians) and as "mudpuppies" by everyone else. These can be in excess of 12 inches in total length.
- All salamanders are associated with water, even as adults. Since Wyoming is an arid, high desert state, it is no surprise we have few amphibians.
- Tiger salamanders can be very abundant in some portions of Wyoming, being especially common in beaver pond habitats, even high in the mountains (up to 10,000 feet). Tiger salamanders are often found in stock ponds, far from other water sources.
- Tiger salamanders are efficient, voracious predators, feeding exclusively on animal matter. Food items include aquatic insects, other salamanders, earth worms, and anything else they can capture that is smaller than them.
